

A
REVIEW
OF THE
STATE
OF THE
BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, October 9. 1708.

WE have gone thro' the Proceedings, Charges and Replies, in the Case of the Dissenting Clergy in *Scotland*; I shall now enter upon three Things, which in Course are requir'd to be spoken to, relating to this Affair, in order to clear up the present Case to the World, and to set it in a true Light; and for Want of which People are left on both sides to commit Mistakes to the Prejudice of both.

1. To examine the Allegation of the *Episcopal* Ministers, as to the Obligation

which is now upon them, of taking the Oaths, or praying for the Queen.

2. The Queen's Letter to the Privy-Council of *Scotland*, from whence the Encouragement to their erecting Meeting-Houses in *Scotland* was suppos'd to be deriv'd, and the Encouragement they take from it.
3. The Conduct of the Church and of the Civil Power, which these Ministers separately consider'd.
4. The Behaviour of the Ministers themselves and of their Party, on several Occasions, and the Reasons which have

have at several Times oblig'd the Government to suppress them.

5. The Article or Complaint of Persecution consider'd. 1. As it respects the Civil Government. 2. As it concerns the Church of *Scotland*. And 3. As it concerns the People of *England*, under whatsoever Denomination, whether as *Dissenters*, and of their being charg'd with being of the same Principle from this as a Precedent; or as Church-Men, and of their Injustice in calling it Persecution, and insulting the *Dissenters* upon that Head, while they are guilty of the same thing themselves.

These Heads, if the Author shall be spar'd Life to go thro' them, may perhaps furnish us all with a full History of the Affair, and lead us into truer Notions than yet we have receiv'd, both of the Establishment in *Scotland*, and of the State of Dissenting in *Scotland*; and in all this I shall endeavour to proceed so impartially, as to give no Offence, if possible, that can be avoided to any Party whatsoever — I shall avoid Personal Reflections upon any; even the *Episcopal* Clergy themselves shall have no Insult from me, nor any Reason to complain of Injustice; if in any thing I should slip by Misadvertance, Misinformation, or Want of Information; if I should do them any wrong in Matter of Fact, or in representing Things as they stand, as I have the Honour to be known to some of the best and most judicious of them, on the least Information of such Error from them, I shall do them Justice; and till I refuse them that Justice upon their offering to convince me of some Mistake, I ought not to be reproach'd with it.

First. Then as to the Matter of taking the Oaths to the Government, I suppose, I needed not to say, that it was directed by Act of Parliament — But since it has been insisted upon by some in *England*, (I do not say that the *Episcopal* Ministers in *Scotland* insist on it, or claim by Law to be exempted) but in *England*, I know, it has been alledg'd, that the Ministers in *Scotland* are not oblig'd to take it; for that the Act of Parliament of the 12th of June,

and the Proclamation thereupon of the 21st of July, 1702, do not expressly mention the Ministers of the Gospel: But that by the Act of Parliament, Persons in publick Trust, *Civil, Ecclesiastick or Military* are only mention'd, and in the Proclamation subsequent to and founded upon the said Act, all the several Persons, who are to take the said Oaths, are enumerated, and no Mention made of the Ministers — But such People are desir'd to remember, that besides these Acts, and subsequent to them both, *viz.* On the 24th of September, 1702, a particular and especial Act of Council was pass'd in *Scotland*, founded upon a former Act of Parliament, *viz.* The 6th Act, 4th Sess. of the first Parliament of William and Mary, pass'd, May 23, 1693, it is expressly Enacted, Thus — Therefore the King and Queen's Majesty, with Advice and Consent of the Estates of Parliament, Statute and Ordain, that the said Oath of Allegiance be sworn, and the same with the afore-said Assurance be subscrib'd by all Noblemen, and their eldest Sons being past twenty one Years of Age, and by all Persons in Offices and Places of Publick Trust, Civil, Ecclesiastick, and Military; To wit, by all Members of Parliament, and Electors of Members of Parliament; all Privy Counsellors and Officers of State, and of the Crown; All the Lords of Session, Advocates and Members of the College of Justice, &c. And after several other Enumerations in the same Paragraph, "All Preachers and Ministers of the Gospel WHATSOEVER; and by the same Act immediately after, saying, That Officers executing their Employment, without taking the Oaths, &c. shall be depriv'd; It also Enacts, that Ministers provided of Kirks, shall be depriv'd of their Benefices and Stipends; and Preachers not provided of Kirks shall be punish'd by Banishment, or otherwise as the Council shall think fit."

Subsequent to, and grounded upon this Act of Parliament, Her present Majesty coming to the Crown, an Act of Council pass'd

part in Scotland, Septemb. 24. 1702. Appointing the Oath of Allegiance to be sworn, and it, and the Assurance to be Sign'd, Conform to the said Act of Parliament, by all Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel, &c. in these Words.

The Lords of Her Majesty's Privy Council, taking into their Consideration, That in the two Proclamations emitted by their Lordships, since the Death of King WILLIAM of ever Glorious Memory, in pursuance of the Act of Parliament 1693. Entitled, Act for taking the Oaths of Allegiance and Assurance, there is no special Provision made, as was made in the Proclamation, issued out upon the same Act. May 30. 1693, before whom, and betwixt; and what Day, Ministers Preachers of the Gospel; and the other Persons mention'd therein, ought to swear the said Oath of Allegiance, and subscribe the same, with the Assurance to Her Majesty Queen ANNE, as is now appointed by the Act, of the last Session of the last Parliament, Entitled, Act Recognizing Her Majesty's Royal Power and Authority, &c. And that it is fit that the same be supply'd: Do therefore by Vertue and Warrant of the said Act, and the Power thereby to them commited, Appoint and Ordain all Ministers, Preachers of the Gospel, and all Clerks of Church Judicatories, and Precentors, Masters and Doctors of Universities, Colleges, or Schools, Keepers of Publick Libraries, Chaplains in Families, and Pedagogues, and Governors to Children or Youth, to swear the said Oath of Allegiance, and subscribe the same with the Assurance to Her Majesty. And then goes on to prescribe the Persons and Time, before whom and when this Oath is to be taken.

As this is a clear Testimony, that the Laws of Scotland do require, all Ministers

or Preachers of the Gospel to take the Oath of Allegiance, and inflict, the Penalty, viz. Banishment upon Preachers unprovided of Kirks; it will appear, that hitherto the Government of Scotland have not gone to the extent of the Law, since the Ministers of both sorts, who have preach'd without taking these Oaths, and who still refuse to take them, are not to this hour all of them depriv'd of their Benefices or Stipends, and not one of them, no, not the most obstinate, was ever yet banished for the same.

Before I proceed farther in this Part, it is necessary to tell Our Readers who are Englishmen, what this Oath and Assurance to be taken in Scotland are, and then we shall proceed.

The Oath is *Verbatim* the same in England.

I A. B. do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful, and bear true Allegiance to her Majesty Queen ANNE. So help me G. O. D.

The Assurance runs thus.

I A. B. do in the Sincerity of my Heart assert, acknowledge and declare, that her Majesty Queen ANNE is the only Lawful Undoubted Sovereign of this Realm, as well *de Jure*, that is of Right, QUEEN, as *de Facto*, that is in the Possession and Exercise of the Government; and therefore I do sincerely and faithfully promise and engage, that I will with Heart and Hand, Life and Goods, maintain and defend her Majesty's Title and Government against the pretended Prince of Wales, and his Adherents, and all other Enemies, who either by open or secret Attempts shall disturb or disquiet her Majesty in the Possession and Exercise thereof.